CONFERENCE connection
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TRANSFORMING CHURCHES, TRANSFORMING LIVES
Southeast Conference UNITED CHURCH of CHRIST
SOUTHEAST UCC Conference

April 1, 2017

From the Interim Conference Minister

by Marie Bacchiocchi, Interim Conference Minister

April is upon us! As spring bursts forth, as we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus from the grave, let us remember all that is happening in the world and in our conference. The Southeast Conference is bustling with plans and activities. There are installations, ecclesiastical councils, and meetings. There are congregations in various points of the search process, there are retreats and festivals. Spring truly does mean new life!

I invite you to share with us what is going on in your congregation. What are your plans that the rest of us want to know about? What activities are happening that we would love to attend with you? Share your news and events with us! That way we can support each other with our prayers and our presence.

We are so much stronger together than we can ever be alone. This fact makes it crucial we know what is going on in the life of each and every congregation so that we can support and encourage one another. And, when I know of events that are happening, I can add them into my schedule and come and be with you in your faithful witness of Jesus Christ in all of its forms.

I want to add to events to your calendars: the Southeast Conference Annual Meeting at Piedmont College, June 8-10 and the General Synod of the United Church of Christ in Baltimore, MD, June 30-July4. Both are wonderful opportunities to learn about our denomination and to find and give support and encouragement. Consider joining us for one or both of these events. More information about both Annual Meeting and General Synod will be coming.

Meanwhile, let us share in Easter's promise of new life! Let us celebrate the mission and ministry of the Southeast Conference in all of its locations.

Blessings,
Marie

In This Issue

From the Interim Conference Minister
Caring Community and Conference Connections
Call for Annual Meeting Workshops & Displays
African American Women in Ministry
Day 1 Benefit Honors 2017 Community Leaders
2017 UCC Southern Region Women's Retreat
Climate March in Washington, D.C
Sanctuary FAQ Webinar
Reminder about Copyright Issues
Registration Now Open for PATHWAYS
Our Whole Lives Facilitator training

Coming Events

SECUCC Staff Meeting
Monday, April 3
10:00 am
Atlanta, GA

PATHWAYS Committee Meeting
Saturday, April 8
Atlanta, GA

Commission on Ministry
Saturday, May 20
10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Pilgrim UCC
Chattanooga, TN

SECUCC Annual Meeting
Fri-Sat, June 9-10
Piedmont College
Demorest, GA

Prayer List

We are continuing the process of praying for authorized ministers, congregations, and ministry groups throughout 2017. We encourage you to include these prayer requests in your local church newsletter, share them with your prayer circle, and include them in your own prayers. Click here to download the entire 2017 prayer list.

Week of April 2

- Deer Lodge Congregational UCC; Deer Lodge, TN
- James Banks
- Marie Fortune
- Laurie Robins
- Jeane Spoor

Week of April 9

- Open Table; Mobile, Alabama
- Susannah Davis
- Dorothea Lotze-Kola
- Allen Mullinax
- Stephen Sterner

Prayer Requests

- Our sympathies to the family of **Rev. John Roemer**, who passed away March 2, 2017 in Louisville at the age of 88. John was ordained a Minister in the United Church of Christ in 1960. Rev. Roemer served churches in IN, TN, and KY before retiring after 31 years in 1991. Christened, confirmed, and ordained, John was a lifetime member of Immanuel United Church of Christ in Louisville, KY.

Conference Transitions

- **Edward Colf** was ordained on Saturday, March 18 at the United Church of Huntsville. View photos on our website.

Churches in Transition

Oak Grove Congregational Christian, Pine Mountain Georgia; Brookmeade Congregational UCC, Nashville Tennessee; Howard Congregational UCC, Nashville Tennessee; United Church, Huntsville, Tennessee; Holy Trinity Community Church, Nashville Tennessee.

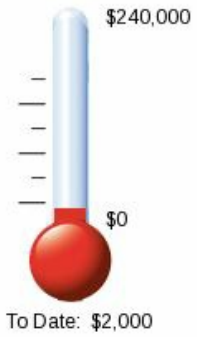
News from Around the Conference

Call for Annual Meeting Workshops & Displays

It's time to start planning for Annual Meeting, June 9-10, 2017.

- **Workshops**: Do you have a workshop topic you'd like to see offered at this year's SEC Annual Meeting? Your ideas are welcomed!

OCWM Giving



Our Church's Wider Mission provides for programs, resources, and tools to keep our churches strong, effective, and growing. Our goal for 2017 is $240,000.
Donate today!

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Connect with Us!

- **Presenters**: Are you a presenter who would like to lead a workshop?
- **Displays**: If you are interested in setting up a display table in the common meeting/registration area, please let us know.

Contact Debbie Spearman, Generosity Coordinator at dspearman@secucc.org no later by May 19, 2017.

African American Women in Ministry Gather

From March 9-11, 2017 African American women from across the nation convened for their biennial conference - "Sisters' Lives Matter: Facing the Fierce Urgency of Now." Conference participants were empowered through a spirit-filled time of inspiration and renewal - worship, workshops, panel discussions, a prayer room, sister circle discussions, community building, networking and sister time. Several workshop facilitators, including Rev. Susan Mitchell from the Southeast Conference, also offered challenges and reminders of the fierce urgency of now. Rev. Charmaine Penn Johnson represented the SECUCC on the planning committee. Read more and view photos on our website.

Day 1 Benefit Honors 2017 Community Leaders of Faith

Margaret Graff & Richard Higgins, members of Kirkwood UCC, were honored on March 21, 2017 at the annual Day 1 benefit and celebration. They, along with the Rev. Dr. Joseph E. Lowery, John Schuerholz, and Rev. Dr. Thomas G. Long were lifted up for their commitment to the good of the community and deep commitment to their church and Christian faith. The event supports the Day 1 ecumenical radio and internet ministry (formerly known as The Protestant Hour) which has broadcast sermons by outstanding preachers from the mainline denominations for over 70 years. Read more on our website.

2017 UCC Southern Region Women's Retreat/Conference

Joyful Expectation, Peaceful Inspiration! is the theme for the upcoming Oct 20-22, 2017, UCC Southern Region Women's Retreat/Conference at Mo Ranch in Hunt, TX. Women from four UCC Conferences (Southern, Florida, South Central and Southeast) are invited. If you are wondering who comes up with the program ideas and who does the planning and organizing, check out the "Planner Bios" on our website. More information will be released in a timely fashion about leaders, program details and registration information. If you have 2017 SRW questions contact Mary Ruth, Representating Women of Southeast Conference, at marybillruth@gmail.com.

News from the United Church of Christ

Climate March in Washington, D.C. is April 29

The UCC Council for Climate Justice along with Justice and Witness Ministries are official co-sponsors of the climate march in Washington, DC. This march is being organized by the People's Climate Movement which spearheaded the 2014 march in New York City that had 400,000 in attendance. Let the UCC know if you are planning to come, so they can coordinate a strong UCC presence at the march. More info.

In addition, the national leadership of the United Church of Christ is speaking out for God's creation. After President Donald Trump abdicated responsibility for climate change with a March 28 executive order that undoes the past administration's climate policies, revives the fossil fuel industry, cuts the EPA's budget and eliminates many climate research programs, this faith community will not stay silent. Here is their statement.

Sanctuary FAQ Webinar

On April 18, 2017 from 2-3 pm EDT the UCC Insurance Boards will be presenting information about being a Sanctuary church. Heather Kimmell, UCC General Counsel, addresses the current interest of faith communities in operating as sanctuary churches, the legal risks, and ways churches can minister to undocumented persons. More information and registration.

Reminder about Copyright Issues with "The Dash" poem as well as Stock Photography

Our UCC General Counsel in Cleveland would like to remind folks that if you have any portion of the poem **The Dash** by Linda Ellis included in your hard copy or online publications, including websites, Facebook, Instagram, etc. your are at risk of being threatened with a copyright enforcement action by The Dash Management, the company that enforces the copyright.

In a similar vein, be sure not to search the Internet to find images you want to use on your website, Facebook, etc. as many of those photos and graphics are also copyrighted by stock photo providers.

Many companies (including Dash Management and Getty Images) essentially make a living by finding copyright violations and threatening a lawsuit. Publishing any portion of any work without permission may result in a church's liability for statutory damages, which are generally not covered by insurance. Properly attributing the work is not a substitute for getting a license (permission) from the copyright owner, and copyright owners are entitled to enforce their copyrights.

Learn more here: https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/image-copyright-infringement

Training, Learning and Retreat Opportunities

Registration Now Open for PATHWAYS class: "What Does the Bible Say About Friendship?"

"No one has greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends," Jesus tells us in John 15:13 (Common English Bible). What makes a friend worthy of laying down one's life to save that friend? The Bible has much to teach us about the value of trusted companions for life's journey, especially the journey of discipleship that we as Christians are called to make.

- Course Dates: April 26 ~ May 23, 2017 (4 Weeks)
- Facilitator: Rev. Ruth Shaver, D.Min.
- Tuition Cost: $99
- **Early Registration Easter Spring Special - $75** *(Register by Wednesday, April 12th)*
- Regular Registration Fee is Due by April 19, 2017

This is a Explorer Series Course designed with a four-week long curriculum. All are invited to participate. To register, visit the PATHWAYS website.

Our Whole Lives Facilitator training

- What: O.W.L facilitator training for grades 7-9/10-12
- When: October 13th-15th, 2017
- Where: HVUUC 136 Bob Jobe Rd, Johnson City, TN
- Who: Trainers are Erica Hazra and Mark Huffman
- Cost: $275 for training, meals, and snacks. Complimentary airport transportation and home hospitality also available.

Please visit the registration page to view details for the training event: https://hvuuc.org/owl-facilitator-training/
Please contact Sarah White with any questions or concerns by emailing DRE@hvuuc.org or calling (941) 626-7973.